Appendix: claims as pending upon entry of this amendment.

1. (twice amended) A [non-human] transgenic [animal] rodent genetically engineered to express a syndecan or proteoglycan portions thereof, wherein the [animal] rodent is characterized by an obese phenotype.

2. (twice amended) The [animal] rodent of claim 1 wherein the [animal] rodent expresses a syndecan from a genetically engineered construct stably integrated into its genome.

3. (twice amended) The [animal] rodent of claim 2 wherein the molecule is syndecan -1.

4. (twice amended) The animal of claim 2 wherein the syndecan is expressed [preferentially] in the areas of the hypothalamus responsible for the regulation of body weight and energy balance.

5. (amended) The [animal] rodent of claim [4] 1 having incorporated therein a construct including a cytomegalovirus promoter or portion thereof including the intermediate/early enhancer.

6. (amended) The [animal] rodent of claim 1 having the genotype FVB/N-TgN(synd-1).

Please cancel claims 7-9.

10. (twice amended) A method for screening for compounds which can alter body weight comprising:

administering a compound to a [non-human] transgenic [animal] rodent genetically engineered to express a syndecan or proteoglycan portions thereof, wherein the [animal] rodent is characterized by an obese phenotype[.], and

observing whether there is a change in body weight over a period of time.

11. (twice amended) The method of claim 10 wherein the [animal] rodent expresses a syndecan from a genetically engineered construct stably integrated into its genome.

13. (twice amended) The method of claim 11 wherein the syndecan is expressed [preferentially] in the areas of the hypothalamus responsible for the regulation of body weight and energy balance.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein the animal has incorporated therein a construct including a cytomegalovirus promoter or portion thereof including the intermediate/early enhancer.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the animal has the genotype FVB/N-TgN(synd-1).